



HISTORIC PLACES WELLINGTON INC
PO BOX 12426 THORNDON WELLINGTON 6144

Newsletter

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In this issue:

- Annual General Meeting
- Gordon Wilson Flats Victory
- Wellington Heritage Week
- Opera House Talk
- Subscriptions Due
- Upcoming Events

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EVENTS

23-29 October – Wellington City Heritage Week

For a full list of events go to:

www.wellingtoncityheritageweek.co.nz

Annual General Meeting — *Jamie Jacobs*

Historic Places Wellington held its AGM on Thursday, 10 August 2017 at St Andrew's on The Terrace. There were 29 attendees (and 17 apologies) who enjoyed a pleasant evening of food, drink, and conversation before and after the business portion of the AGM.

There was a single motion considered that evening during the AGM. The members present unanimously voted in favour of recommending that Historic Places Aotearoa change the levy system for Member Organisations from a per capita system to a simpler one having a flat fee based on the general size of Member Organisations. The recommendation will be presented at the next HPA AGM.

The eleven current committee members were re-elected for the coming year: David Batchelor, Deborah Cranko, John Daniels, Peter Dowell, Nigel Isaacs, Jamie Jacobs, Christina Mackay, Vivienne Morrell, Ben Schrader, Priscilla Williams, and Felicity Wong. One new committee member was nominated and elected at the meeting – congratulations and welcome to Sally Hasell! Sally's addition to the committee means that the body will be operating with a full complement of members.

Unfortunately, the planned talk for the evening by historian and committee member Ben Schrader, titled 'Residential E and the "saving" of Thorndon,' could not proceed because of technical difficulties with the projection. The committee would like to express our apologies to Ben and the members present, and would like you to know that the talk will be rescheduled for a date later in the year. We will let you know when.

New committee member Dr Sally Hasell has recently retired from a career in food safety and regulation. She is past-president of the New Zealand Institute of Food Science and Technology and a past trustee for New Horizons for Women. She is a long-standing member of Graduate Women Wellington and has been active in scholarships and awards for women. She has had an interest in heritage issues since she was a child, particularly industrial archaeology.

Gordon Wilson Flats Victory — Ben Schrader

In a majority decision last week, the Environment Court upheld an Architectural Centre appeal against removing the heritage status of the Gordon Wilson Flats. Following a successful request from Victoria University (the building's owner), the Wellington City Council had delisted the building from its district plan last year. This had paved the way for the university to demolish the building and land bank the site for a future purpose.

The Court's decision noted that the appeal had "provided information that raises the heritage significance architecturally, socially and technically ... rather than diminishing the building's heritage value ... it has in fact strengthened the reasons for it to be listed." It further stated that the "scarcity of social housing in Wellington ... [meant] great care should be taken before demolition." The full decision is available here: <https://environmentcourt.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/2017-NZEnvC-116-The-Architectural-Centre-v-Wellington-City-Council.pdf>

At this stage, the university has not responded to the decision. It would be hoped that they will now move to preserve the building and return it to some form of residential use. But it is also possible that they will appeal the decision or continue to let the building deteriorate: demolition by neglect. This fate might be avoided if Heritage New Zealand became involved. During the appeal process our main heritage body declined to advocate for the building's retention. Now that its heritage value is undisputed the organisation should move promptly to put it on its list.



Photograph courtesy of [Scoop](#)

HPW's position and further debate

HPW financially supported the Architectural Centre's appeal. The Committee held mixed views as to the architectural merit of the building – a reflection of wider community views – but all agreed that the delisting of a heritage building could set a dangerous precedent. It was on this basis that HPW gave its support. The Court's rejection of the delisting will hopefully discourage other heritage building owners from taking this route.

Ben Schrader was an expert social history witness for the Architectural Centre. Following widespread public disbelief over the Court decision, he penned this op-ed piece in defence of the building: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/comment/95745934/ben-schrader-in-defence-of-the-gordon-wilson-flats-and-postwar-modernism> An accompanying report canvassing both sides of the debate can be read here: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/home-property/95752073/gordon-wilson-flats--architecturally-significant-or-significant-eyesore>

Wellington City Heritage Week — David Batchelor

Historic Places Wellington is proud to present Wellington City Heritage Week 23-29 October in partnership with Wellington City Council and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. Heritage Week celebrates Wellington's built, social, and cultural heritage with a series of public city walks, exhibitions, property tours, and films.

WELLINGTON CITY HERITAGE WEEK 2017 23 - 29 OCT



Over 20 events are scheduled throughout the week with a vast range of interests covered. Highlights of the week include:

- A free archaeological walking tour by renowned archaeologist Mary O’Keeffe on Monday 23rd 2pm (Labour Day),
- A presentation at the City Gallery discussing pressing heritage issues on Tuesday 24th 6pm,
- The National Library of New Zealand hosting ‘HUMBLE: The Life of 100 Small Objects’ presenting the quirky treasures in the Ephemera Collection throughout the week,
- A showcase of recently preserved and rarely seen films at Nga Taonga Sound and Vision on Friday 27th 7pm to celebrate UNESCO World Audiovisual Heritage Day 2017,
- Open Day at St Gerard’s Monastery on Saturday 28th 10am-3pm,
- A Magical Mystery Drawing Tour providing surprise locations for drawing inspiration on Saturday 28th 11am – 2pm,
- Te Papa curator Katie Cooper showing guests the flurry of 19th century household activities at the Katherine Mansfield House and Garden on Sunday 29th 2pm.

All events are open to the public. Bookings are required for some events as spaces are limited. Most events are free of charge or koha but please check on the website for costs. For time, location, dates, and more information please go to www.wellingtoncityheritageweek.co.nz.

Historic Places Wellington would like to thank the following hosts for contributing events: The Great War Exhibition, Museums Wellington, Wellington City Archives, Nga Taonga Sound and Vision, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, Wellington City Council, Government House, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, New Zealand Cricket Museum, Heritage Solutions, St Mary of the Angels Catholic Church, ICPE New Zealand Mission, Wrights Hill Fortress Restoration Society, Kaori Cemetery Tours, and Katherine Mansfield Birthplace Society Inc.

Editors’ Note: The driving force behind the initiative is HPW committee member David Batchelor. He has done sterling work to bring it all together and we all hope it will a great success and become an annual event.

Opera House Talk — Vivienne Morrell

On Thursday, 13 July, 7pm at Victoria University of Wellington, Schools of Architecture & Design, Julia Thompson gave a talk on “Wellington’s Grand Opera House.” While the inclement weather reduced the expected turnout, those that attended found the talk fascinating and valued Julia’s new insights into the building. Julia Thompson is undertaking her doctorate in building science at the School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington.



Photograph courtesy of Flickr.com

Subscriptions now due

Just a reminder that HPW subscriptions for the year 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 are now due:

- Individual \$30.00
- Family (2 x adults plus children under 18 years) \$45.00

Payment by online banking is preferred. This can be done by direct payment to our bank account 03 0584 0244032 00. (Be sure to include your name in the payee reference details); or send a cheque payable to Historic Places Wellington and post to: Membership Historic Places Wellington, P.O. Box 12426, Wellington, 6144.

Please email us (wqtn@historicplacesaotearoa.org.nz) if any of your details have changed (address – postal or email; or phone number).

Upcoming Events

Festival of Architecture, 7 to 17 September. Check out the NZIA website for [Wellington events.](#)

City Talks: a series of talks at the City Gallery, initiated by the New Zealand Institute of Architects Wellington Branch and presented in partnership with City Gallery Wellington. Mondays at 6pm on the following days:

11 September: Vajarasana Retreat Centre – non heroic architecture — Gill Matthewson

16 October: Raupo to Deco — Adrian Humphris

20 November: I bought a building – Did I mean to do that? – Malcom Walker